

Royals Win the Pennant With 4-2 Victory Over Yanks

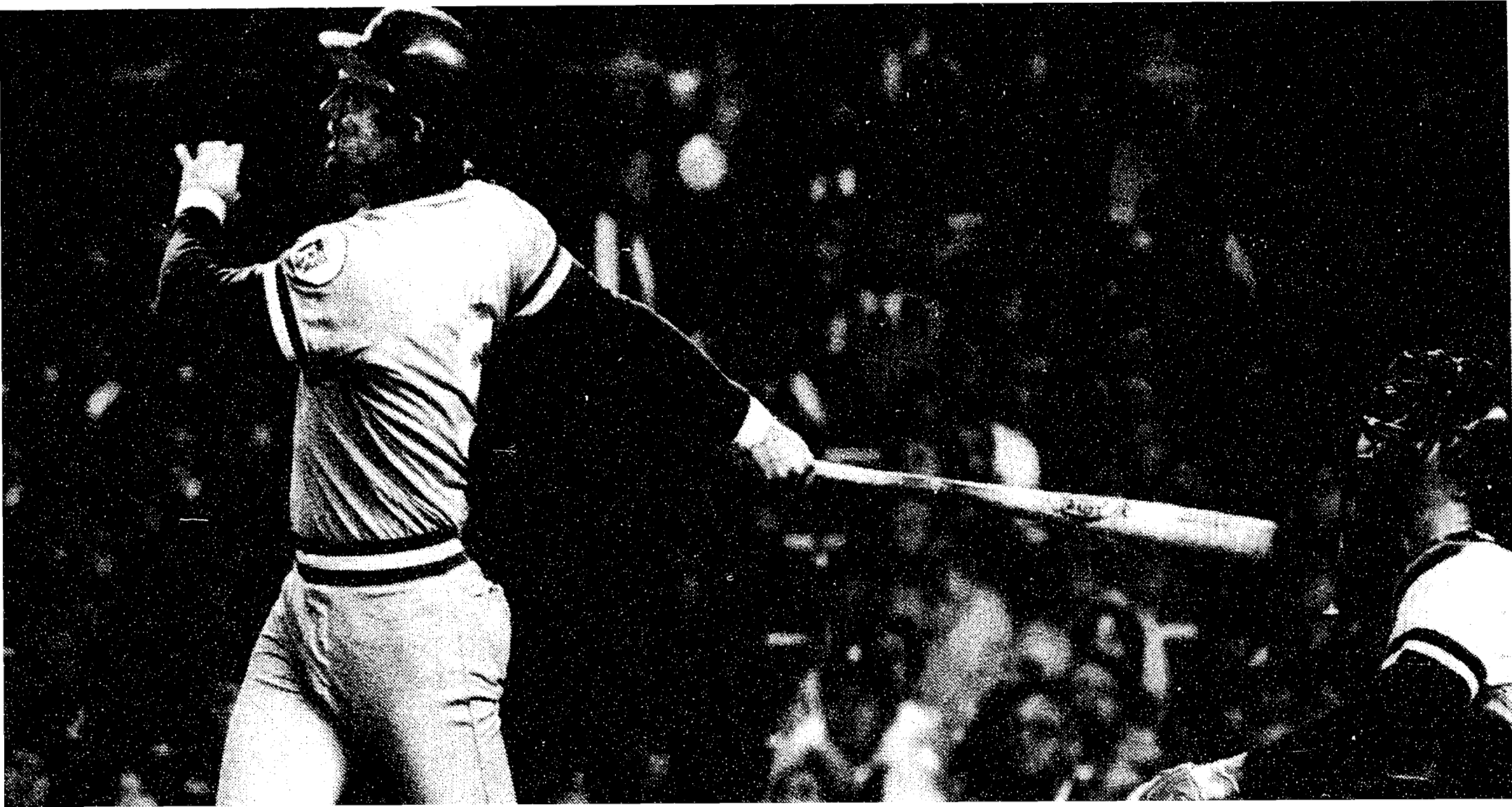
By MURRAY CHASS

New York Times (1923-Current file); Oct 11, 1980;

ProQuest Historical Newspapers The New York Times (1851 - 2006)

pg. 15

Royals Win the Pennant With 4-2 Victory Over Yanks



Photograph for The New York Times by Vic DeLucia

George Brett of the Royals and Rick Cerone, the Yankee catcher, watching Brett's three-run homer sail into stands at the Stadium in seventh inning, giving Kansas City its margin of victory

Brett Hits 3-Run Shot Off Gossage

By MURRAY CHASS

George Brett, the hitter who powered Kansas City all season, connected against the often unhittable Rich Gossage for a three-run homer in the seventh inning last night and catapulted the Royals into the World Series for the first time in their 12-year history.

The three-run homer, the sixth of Brett's playoff experience, gave the Royals a 4-2 victory over the Yankees in the third game of the three-of-five American League pennant playoff.

This was the fourth postseason encounter between the teams and the first time the series ended in the minimum number of games. The last time the Yankees were swept in any postseason confrontation was in 1976, when the Cincinnati Reds defeated them in four games in the World Series.

'The Ultimate'

"The people in Kansas City are going to feel that we won the Series," said Brett, who batted .390 during the season and drove in 118 runs in 117 games. "For us to beat them is the ultimate. People have seen a lot of disappointment in one locker room and a lot of joy in the other. It was just reversed this year."

The outcome was reversed because the Kansas City starters — Larry Gura in the first game, Dennis Leonard in the second, Paul Splittorff in the third — and their ace reliever, Dan Quisenberry, who appeared in the second and third games, held the Yankees to two runs a game.

The outcome was reversed in the third game because Brett hit a Gossage fastball into the third tier of the right-field stands with two out in the seventh.

Gossage had been the most intimidating and overpowering pitcher in the league throughout most of August and September. He was also the pitcher who secured the Yankees' division-clinching victory last Saturday. But last night, in his first appearance since that victory, Gossage neither intimidated nor overpowered anybody.

Double Starts Big Inning

He relieved Tommy John after Willie Wilson had hit a fly-ball double into the right-field corner with two out.

"The pitch was down and away," said John, who until then had allowed only a fifth-inning home run by Frank White, the Royals' second baseman, who was named the most valuable player of the playoff. "It was foul at one time and curled back fair. He shanked it off the end of his bat."

Dick Howser, the Yankee manager, decided at that point that he wanted Gossage to pitch to U. L. Washington, the switch-hitting shortstop who is a better right-handed hitter than left-handed.

Batting left-handed, Washington hit a chopper over the mound and beat it out for a single. It was, both teams agreed, the pivotal play of the game.

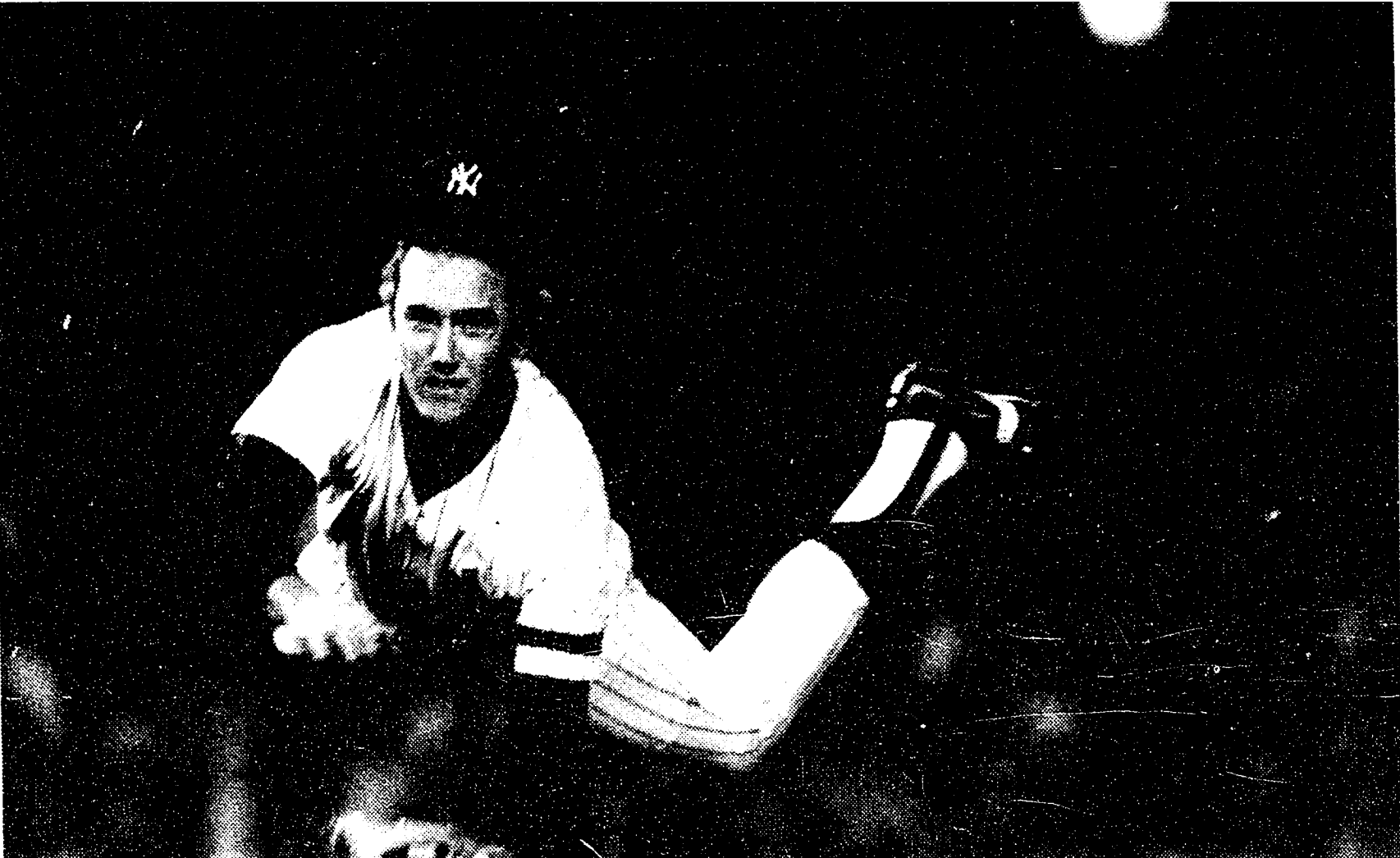
'Down the Middle'

"A lot of players don't run out ground balls, on other teams and this team," Brett said, "and U. L. is one of the guys who do. I wouldn't have got the chance to do it if U. L. hadn't busted his rear end. Thank you, U.L."

With Wilson at third and Washington at first, Brett stepped to the plate. He had hit a home run in his last time at bat in the first game but had failed to hit in his next seven tries.

"We had wanted to keep the ball

Continued on Page 17, Column 1



The New York Times / Barton Silverman

Graig Nettles of Yankees as he slipped in the seventh inning in an attempt to throw out Hal McRae of the Royals

Royals Beat Yanks And Win Pennant

Continued From Page 15

down and away to Brett during the series," Howser said. "With Goose, we wanted it up and away. But the ball apparently was down the middle."

During the season, Gossage had given up only five home runs in 99 innings. Brett had hit 24. Brett also had hit three homers in the third game of the 1978 playoff and a memorable three-run homer in the eighth inning of the fifth game of the 1976 playoffs, a clout that tied the game at 6-6 and set the stage for the pennant-winning homer by Chris Chambliss of the Yankees.

As Brett waited for Gossage's first pitch, he knew what he wanted to do. "I just wanted to pull it and get it up in the air," he said. "With the right-field fence only 310 feet away, you don't have to hit it very far."

Brett did not hit the fastball far but he did hit it high, right into the first couple of rows of the third deck.

"He could just as easily have skied it," Howser said, "but he didn't. I knew it was out. I didn't even get up. I started thinking of who was going to pitch the next inning."

Quisenberry was doing the pitching for Kansas City. He is the first reliever the Royals have had in their playoff years whom they could consistently depend on. Last night, however, he was not so consistent. When he entered the game in the sixth inning after Reggie Jackson had doubled with one out, he gave up an infield single to Oscar Gamble. White, who made a fine play in fielding the ball on the shortstop side of second, tried to catch Jackson rounding third, but his throw sailed over Brett's head, enabling Jackson to score and Gamble to reach third. Rick Cerone then lined a single to left-center, driving in Gamble with the run that gave the Yankees a 2-1 lead.

Watson Gets Third Hit

In the eighth inning, with the Yankees trying to avoid becoming the fifth team to be swept in the American League playoffs, Bob Watson led off with a triple to left-center, his third hit of the game. White had prevented a possible fourth hit in the sixth with a leaping grab of his line drive.

Then, with the pennant in sight, Quisenberry suddenly grew wild. Quisenberry, a right-hander in his first full season in the majors who tied Gossage for the league lead in saves with 33, got two strikes on Jackson but then threw nine straight balls, walking Jackson and Gamble and loading the bases.

After throwing a ball to Cerone, he fi-

Yankees Box Score

GAME THREE					
KANSAS CITY			YANKEES		
	ab	r h bi		ab	r h bi
Wilson lf	5	1 2 0	Randolph 2b	4	0 1 0
Washington ss	4	1 2 0	Dent ss	4	0 0 0
G. Brett 3b	4	1 1 3	Watson 1b	4	0 3 0
McRae dh	4	0 2 0	Jackson rf	3	1 1 0
Otis cf	4	0 1 0	Soderholm dh	2	0 0 0
Aikens 1b	4	0 3 0	Gamble dh	1	1 1 0
Porter c	3	0 0 0	Cerone c	4	0 1 1
Hurdler lf	2	0 0 0	Piniella lf	2	0 0 0
Wathan rf	2	0 0 0	Spencer ph	1	0 0 0
White 2b	4	1 1 1	Lefebvre lf	0	0 0 0
			Rodriguez 3b	2	0 1 0
			Nettles 3b	2	0 0 0
			Brown cf	4	0 0 0

Total	36	4	12	4	Total	33	2	8	1
Kansas City					000	010	300	—4	
Yankees					000	002	000	—2	

E — White. DP — Kansas City 2, Yankees 1.
LOB — Kansas City 6, Yankees 8. 2B — Watson, Jackson, Wilson. 3B — Watson.
HRs — White (1), G. Brett (2).

	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO
Kansas City						
Splitterff	5 1/3	5	1	1	2	3
Quisenberry W, 1-0	3 2/3	3	1	0	2	1
Yankees						
John	6 2/3	8	2	2	1	3
Gossage L, 0-1	1/3	3	2	2	0	0
Underwood	2	1	0	0	0	1
Wild pitch — John. Balk — Splitterff.						
T — 2:59. A — 56,588.						

nally got a strike over. Then Cerone rapped a line drive toward left.

"I think everybody in the ball park thought it was in left field," Howser said. "Everybody except Washington."

A Double Play

Washington, racing to his right, snared the ball. The catch surprised Jackson, who had broken immediately from second and was an easy out when the shortstop flipped to White.

"I'm not going to fault Reggie," Howser said.

The double play took out of the Yankees whatever little was left after Brett had struck his blow. Jim Spencer batted for Lou Piniella, but Quisenberry induced him to hit a routine grounder to White for the final out of the inning.

In the ninth, Quisenberry got Graig Nettles on a fly to right, Bobby Brown on a fly to left and threw a third strike past Willie Randolph on a 3-2 count. As Randolph walked away from the plate, the Royals erupted from the dugout. They were, finally, American League champions. The Yankees, the team that had frustrated them for so long, were suddenly losers.

The Royals will now await the outcome of the National League playoff. They never had any interest in that outcome before.

Blocked due to copyright.
See full page image or
microfilm.

The New York Times

Reggie Jackson sliding past Darrell Porter, the Royals' catcher, to score Yankees' first run in sixth inning after a wild throw.